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OUTGOING MESSAGE

[REDACTED]

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TOT: 220732Z JAN 90

DIRECTOR 017355

TO: PRIORITY EUROPEAN BRIEF.

[REDACTED] *CIA* [REDACTED]

OUTGOING MESSAGE

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN BRIEF [REDACTED] FOR 22 JANUARY 1990.

FROM: DD1/O/CPAS.

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1. USSR: CAUCASUS SITUATION REPORT [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED]

3. [REDACTED]

4. [REDACTED]

1. USSR: CAUCASUS SITUATION REPORT [REDACTED]

MILITARY STILL TRYING TO GAIN CONTROL

SOVIET TROOPS APPARENTLY CONTROL MOST GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND COMMUNICATIONS CENTERS IN BAKU, BUT LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS AND SPORADIC FIGHTING CONTINUE THERE. AZERI CADETS FROM A BAKU MILITARY SCHOOL JOINED NATIONALISTS IN CLASHES WITH SOLDIERS YESTERDAY. MOSCOW HAS REPLACED THE PARTY CHIEF; THE SECOND SECRETARY AND THE PREMIER WILL SHARE POWER FOR NOW. A REPUBLIC SUPREME SOVIET SESSION WAS CALLED YESTERDAY TO ASSESS THE SITUATION. [REDACTED]

COMMENT: THE POPULACE CONTINUES TO BREAK CURFEW AND TO HOLD LARGE MEETINGS, DESPITE EMERGENCY MEASURES FORBIDDING THESE ACTIONS.

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ANY STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC SUPREME SOVIET, WHICH HAS SIDED WITH NATIONALISTS OVER PARTY LEADERS IN THE PAST, IS LIKELY TO BE ANTI-MOSCOW AND COULD FUEL MORE DISTURBANCES. THE NEW PARTY LEADERS ARE LIKELY TO ACT AS CARETAKERS UNTIL A REPUBLIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING CAN BE CONVENED AND A FIRST SECRETARY ELECTED. MOSCOW MAY BE ABLE TO NEUTRALIZE AZERI RADICALS PARTIALLY BY ENCOURAGING LOCAL PARTY LEADERS TO ELECT A FIRST SECRETARY WHO HAS STRONG TIES TO MODERATE NATIONALISTS.

OTHER EVENTS IN THE REGION

NATIONALISTS IN NAKHICHEVAN CONTINUE TO SEEK SUPPORT OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY FOR THEIR INDEPENDENCE DRIVE, BUT MOSCOW HAS MADE NO OFFICIAL COMMENT. IN LENKORAN, NATIONALISTS CONTINUE TO KEEP TROOPS FROM ENTERING. SOME PRESS REPORTS INDICATE 100 IRANIAN GENDARMES HAVE HEADED THERE TO SHOW THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH NATIONALISTS, WHO ARE ALSO CALLING FOR SECESSION.

COMMENT: EVEN IF MOSCOW SUCCEEDS IN CONTROLLING BAKU, THE TASK OF GAINING CONTROL OF THE REST OF THE SEETHING REGION WILL REMAIN DIFFICULT. THE PREPARATIONS FOR NEW MILITARY UNITS INDICATE MOSCOW IS PROBABLY PLANNING FOR A LONG TERM MILITARY OCCUPATION OF AT LEAST SOME PARTS OF AZERBAIJAN.

SOVIET-IRANIAN RELATIONS

FOREIGN MINISTER SHEVARDNADZE SENT A MESSAGE ON SATURDAY TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER VELAYATI ON DEVELOPMENTS IN AZERBAIJAN. THE IRANIAN CABINET MET ON SUNDAY IN RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS AND CHARGED VELAYATI TO "TAKE SERIOUS MEASURES" TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM. THE TEHRAN TIMES--WHICH OFTEN SPEAKS FOR PRESIDENT RAFSANJANI--HAS CALLED FOR AN URGENT BILATERAL MEETING "AT LEAST" AT THE FOREIGN-MINISTERIAL LEVEL. MEANWHILE, THIS WEEKEND THE SOVIET PRESS HIGHLIGHTED INSTANCES OF IRANIAN NONCOOPERATION, ACCUSING IRANIAN AZERIS OF SUPPLYING WEAPONS TO SOVIET AZERIS--A CHARGE THE IRANIAN NEWS AGENCY HAS TERMED "BASELESS AND OUTRAGEOUS"--AND CRITICIZING IRANIAN STRESS ON AN ISLAMIC MOTIVATION BEHIND THE DISCONTENT. FOR ITS PART, THE IRANIAN MEDIA HAS BEEN NONCONFRONTATIONAL, EXCEPT FOR BROADCASTS TO THE ARAB WORLD.

COMMENT: SHEVARDNADZE NO DOUBT TRIED TO JUSTIFY THE USE OF FORCE TO TEHRAN, HOPING TO ENCOURAGE THE CONTINUATION OF THE GENERALLY RESTRAINED IRANIAN REACTION. A HIGH-LEVEL BILATERAL MEETING--PERHAPS NOT ATTENDED BY SHEVARDNADZE HIMSELF--WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE SOON. MOSCOW PROBABLY BELIEVES THAT PUBLICIZING IRANIAN TRANSGRESSIONS WILL HELP PREVENT FUTURE INCIDENTS AND UNDERLINE THAT ACTIONS BY IRANIANS NEAR THE BORDER ARE EXACERBATING THE SITUATION. IRANIAN BROADCASTS TO THE MIDDLE EAST ARE PROBABLY INTENDED TO FORESTALL ACCUSATIONS OF CATERING TO THE SOVIETS.

A SHORT-LIVED BOOST FOR GORBACHEV

GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV MOVED BOLDLY OVER THE WEEKEND TO BUILD SUPPORT FOR HIS DECISION TO ACT AGAINST AZERI NATIONALISTS IN BAKU. HE IS SEEKING TO LEGITIMIZE HIS DECISION BY INVOLVING OTHER SENIOR LEADERS AND INSTITUTIONS. THE SUPREME SOVIET PRESIDUM OFFICIALLY DECLARED A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN BAKU FRIDAY, AND GORBACHEV AND SEVERAL OTHER POLITBURO MEMBERS MET ON THE FOLLOWING DAY WITH FOUR LEADERS OF THE AZERI PARTY. PRIME MINISTER RYZHKOV REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN GIVEN CHARGE OF COORDINATING OPERATIONS IN MOSCOW.

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COMMENT: THE DECISION TO USE FORCE TO RESTORE ORDER WILL IN THE SHORT RUN BENEFIT GORBACHEV BY UNDERCUTTING CRITICISM OF HIS INDECISIVENESS. ACCORDING TO US EMBASSY SOURCES, THE SOVIET LEADER WAS UNDER PRESSURE FROM HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS TO INTERVENE, AND HE ALMOST CERTAINLY BELIEVED THAT HE HAD TO END THE VIOLENCE IN THE AZERI CAPITAL BEFORE THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM SCHEDULED FOR NEXT WEEK. THE BENEFIT TO GORBACHEV AND THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP MAY BE SHORT LIVED; FAILURE TO RESTORE ORDER AND PROLONGED FIGHTING IN THE CAUCASUS WOULD DAMAGE HIS REPUTATION AMONG SLAVS CONCERNED ABOUT THE LOSS OF LIFE IN A MUSLIM WAR ZONE REMINISCENT OF AFGHANISTAN.

USSR

NEW AZERI PARTY LEADERS

INSTALLING REPUBLIC SECOND SECRETARY VIKTOR POLYANICHKO AND PREMIER AYAZ MUTALIBOV AS COLEADERS OF THE AZERI REPUBLIC PARTY ORGANIZATION LEAVES MOSCOW WITH A RUSSIAN OUTSIDER AND AN AZERI INSIDER IN CHARGE.

POLYANICHKO, 52, NAMED SECOND SECRETARY IN NOVEMBER 1988, CAME TO AZERBAIJAN DIRECTLY FROM MOSCOW, WHERE HE HAD BEEN A CENTRAL COMMITTEE INSPECTOR. HE MAY HAVE TIES TO POLITBURO MEMBER ALEKSANDR YAKOVLEV FROM HIS TENURE AS A CENTRAL COMMITTEE PROPAGANDA DEPARTMENT SECTOR CHIEF. AS SECOND SECRETARY, HE HAS FULFILLED THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF MOSCOW'S 'WATCHDOG' IN THE REGION.

MUTALIBOV, 51, BY CONTRAST, IS THE QUINTESSENTIAL REPUBLIC INSIDER. HE BECAME REPUBLIC PREMIER LAST JANUARY--TWO WEEKS AFTER 2,500 REPUBLIC OFFICIALS WERE DISCIPLINED BY MOSCOW FOR HAVING FAILED TO CONTROL ETHNIC RIOTS--AND HAS SERVED HIS ENTIRE CAREER IN AZERBAIJAN. MUTALIBOV APPEARS TO SUPPORT THE DEMANDS OF MODERATE REPUBLIC NATIONALISTS; HE SAID IN AN INTERVIEW YESTERDAY THAT 'WE SHALL DO EVERYTHING WITHIN OUR POWER FOR THE RESTORATION OF OUR REPUBLIC'S SOVEREIGN RIGHTS IN RELATION TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH AUTONOMOUS OBLAST.' HE VISITED ISTANBUL EARLIER THIS MONTH, SIGNING AGREEMENTS TO IMPROVE CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND AZERBAIJAN.

OUTGOING MESSAGE

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